

REMARKS

This Amendment is offered in response to the Office Action of January 20, 2006.

The Office Action rejected Claims 11 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kodama reference (U.S. Patent No. 4,356,499) in view of Hobson reference (U.S. 6,199,979) and further in view of Kitahara reference (U.S. Patent No. 6,338,554). The claims 1-9 and 12-19 are allowed.

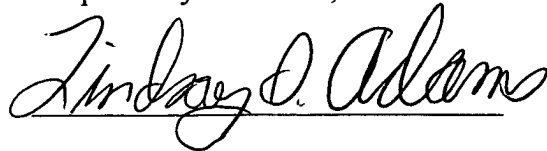
Rejection of Claims 11 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103 (a)

Claims 11 and 20 stand rejected as being unpatentable over Kodama reference in view of Hobson reference and further in view of Kitahara reference.

The Applicants respectfully point out that the plasma processing is used to enhance ink repellent properties of the filter in Kitahara reference. (Column 3, Lines 34-56). Specifically, Kitahara reference teaches plasma polymerization of a fluorocarbon layer, which is hydrophobic. On the other hand, the filter of the presently claimed invention, as disclosed on page 35, lines 11-20 of the specification, is plasma processed to enhance its hydrophilic properties. Therefore, the combination of Kitahara reference with Kodama and Hobson references fails to teach or suggest all the limitation of claims 11 and 20. The Applicants have amended Claims 11 and 20 to reflect this fact. Therefore, the rejection of claims 11 and 20 as being unpatentable over the above references should be withdrawn.

Applicants respectfully requests that a Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. Applicants do not believe that any fees are due. However, if any fees are due, please charge such sums to our Deposit Account 50-1145.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Lindsay S. Adams", written over a horizontal line.

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